



Enhancing the well-being of our people

HEALTH

Implats aims to optimise the health and wellness of its employees and their dependants by managing their health risks while simultaneously providing access to comprehensive occupational, preventative and curative healthcare facilities. The group has responded proactively to the HIV/AIDS epidemic by implementing a number of programmes to minimise the incidence of infection within the organisation and the communities in which it operates; as well as providing comprehensive care and treatment for those individuals who are infected with the virus.

Occupational health and hygiene

All employees and contractors undergo pre-placement, annual and exit medical examinations in order to determine whether the employee is fit to perform the work that he/she is employed to do and to ensure that any occupational ill health is diagnosed early and treated as soon as possible. The three main occupational health challenges are noise (underground and in our surface operations), heat and pulmonary tuberculosis (TB). Airborne pollutants (especially above ground) and exposure to heavy metals and other chemicals pose occupational hygiene risks within specific work environments.

Noise

In keeping with the legally required code of practice concerning noise exposures, a comprehensive hearing conservation programme is in place that aims to reduce the risk of employees developing hearing loss. All employees (including permanent contractors) who are at high-risk of noise exposure are provided with personal hearing protection devices, known as noise clippers.

Implats is committed to achieving the 2008 and 2013 milestones set by the MHSC, which aim to eliminate noise induced hearing loss (NIHL). These milestones include limiting the total noise emitted by all equipment installed at any workplace to a sound pressure level of 110 dB(A).

Heat

A Thermal Stress Management programme is in place to mitigate the risk of heat disorders for all employees working in

underground areas, particularly at our Rustenburg operations, due to the greater depths of the operational areas. The programme includes annual screening of all underground employees and contractors for heat intolerance, heat acclimatisation and continuous monitoring in the work place.

No cases of heat stroke were diagnosed during the review period. However, the predisposition of heat intolerance in female employees remains a concern and is carefully monitored.

TB

The diagnosis, treatment and reporting of TB receives the highest health priority at Implats, especially given the increasing impact of the HIV epidemic on the spread of the disease: 63% of the TB patients at our Rustenburg operations are also infected with HIV (FY2005: 60%). TB is therefore monitored as an occupational disease at all Implats' operations and every employee undergoes annual X-ray screening for TB.

Any employee diagnosed with TB receives free treatment in accordance with World Health Organisation (WHO) Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (DOTS) guidelines and all cases are reported to the Medical Bureau of Occupational Diseases (MBOD) for assessment and possible compensation.

At Refineries, three contractors and one employee were diagnosed with TB during the twelve months under review. Two new cases of pulmonary TB were also diagnosed at Marula Platinum.



Other occupational diseases

Two cases of Asbestosis were diagnosed at our Rustenburg operations in FY2006, and one developed a Mesothelioma. Both patients had previously worked on asbestos mines before joining Impala.

No new cases of Allergy to the Complex Salts of Platinum (ACSOP) were reported at Refineries during the review period.

Airborne pollutants

Dust samples are analysed at our mining operations for Alpha quartz following the promulgation of the Mine Health and Safety Council's milestones for eliminating Silicosis. All samples analysed during the year found the Alpha quartz content to be below detectable limits.

Impala is represented on a task team mandated by the Mining Occupational Health Advisory Committee to set an occupational exposure limit for diesel particulate matter (DPM). As part of this project and also as a baseline assessment, samples have been taken from No. 14 Shaft at our Rustenburg operations (mechanised section) using internationally recognised methodologies and best practice. The results indicate that personal exposure levels are currently in excess of international guidelines for DPM.

Although there are currently no local guidelines, we are working towards achieving international guidelines by reducing DPM emissions. Diesel vehicles are serviced at regular intervals and ventilation is provided to dilute the DPM adequately.

A project to quantify the benefits of low sulphur diesel is underway at Rustenburg operations' No. 12 Shaft. The PLATMINE project objectives are to determine baseline mineworkers' exposure to DPM and to identify high-risk occupations. Preliminary results indicate that personal exposures are in excess of international guidelines for both ultra low sulphur diesel and for regular diesel.

Platinum mine dust and sulphur dioxide exposures at Rustenburg operations are monitored and controlled by an operational airborne pollutants programme to within the occupational exposure limit (OEL). None of the platinum dust samples taken at any of the shafts this year were in excess of the OEL, but average personal sulphur dioxide exposures in the Smelter exceeded the OEL on several occasions during the year due to the escape of fugitive gases from the converters and furnaces. The sulphur reduction strategy will address the capturing and treatment of these fugitive gases within the next two years.

Biological monitoring

Specific employees who work in areas where they could potentially be exposed to heavy metals and chemicals undergo biological monitoring. At our Rustenburg operations, all employees tested for chromium, arsenic, carbon disulphide, nickel and cadmium were well within normal limits. Six employees showed an increase in blood lead levels and are being monitored closely.

Refineries' biological monitoring programme focuses on PGMs, arsenic, lead, methanol, toluene and polyamines. All exposures are within the prescribed legal limits. The programme was expanded during the year to include potential allergens, and no problems were detected.

Sampling of individual exposures per homogeneous exposure groups are also carried out at Marula Platinum according to the legislated guidelines. This has shown that the exposure levels are well within the occupational exposure limits set by the authorities.

Likewise, laboratory employees at Zimplats and Mimosa who are at risk of exposure to heavy metals and chemicals undergo biological monitoring. They are checked half yearly for blood lead and nickel levels and to date, results have been within normal ranges.



HIV and AIDS

HIV/AIDS receives high priority attention across the Implats Group, heralded by initiatives aimed at preventing further HIV transmission and, with treatment and management, to limit the impact of the infection on both the individual and the company.

Test data from our Rustenburg operations show that the prevalence rate amongst employees remains stable at 16%. A survey at both Zimplats' SMC and Ngezi operations showed an HIV prevalence of 20%. Although HIV education programmes, voluntary counselling and testing and treatment programmes have been implemented at Marula Platinum and Mimoso, the HIV prevalence at these operations has not yet been determined by prevalence testing surveys. This will form part of our initiatives in FY2007.

The experience gained in Impala's internal employee programmes has been applied to community programmes through the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) that we sponsor. This includes educational initiatives to ensure that individuals fully understand the risk behaviour that may lead to contracting HIV, as well as to help

employees who are already HIV-positive to prevent or delay the progression of their infection to AIDS.

Everyone at Implats is encouraged to know his or her HIV status by participating in voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) programmes. Individuals diagnosed as HIV-positive are provided with access to treatment (including antiretroviral treatment (ART)) and regular monitoring of their illness, which is co-ordinated by Implats' Wellness Programmes. The number of patients who have started on ART increased by over 50% to 1 64 in FY2006, while over 2,300 HIV-positive patients are currently enrolled on Impala's Wellness Programmes.

Extensive financial and technical support is provided to the communities surrounding Implats' operations, as well as the group's labour-sending organisations. This is channelled through a number of organisations involved in combating the effects of HIV and AIDS. These include home-based care organisations, hospice, traditional healer and youth programmes. In addition, Implats has committed to funding the South African AIDS Vaccine Initiative (SAAVI), which is a cabinet endorsed research initiative aimed at developing an HIV/AIDS vaccine.